

(Record prepared
by Dr. Weber and
translated by
Embassy Bonn)

PRESIDENT'S TRIP TO EUROPE
August-September 1959

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US/MC/3

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

Date: August 27, 1959

Approved for distribution
by AG 8/30

Time: 3:00 p.m.

Place: Palais
Schaumburg

PARTICIPANTS: United States

Federal Republic of Germany

President Eisenhower Chancellor Adenauer
Dr. Heinz Weber
(interpreter)

SUBJECT: Berlin and Germany, Algeria,
German Relations with Eastern Europe (Extracted
from Bonn's
113, 8/29)

COPIES TO: General Goodpaster Amembassy Bonn for Ambassador
S/S - 2 Bruce
G - Mr. Merchant Amembassy Paris for Ambassador
EUR - Mr. Kohler (2) Houghton
GER - Mr. Hillenbrand
S/AE - Mr. Farley



The Chancellor received President Eisenhower at 3:00 p.m.
August 27, 1959 for a second private conversation.

The President then indicated that he had been questioned again and again at his Press Conference about new possibilities the West or Germany were thinking about to better their position with respect to Berlin and reunification. To this question, the President had repeatedly replied that this had to do with a matter which mostly affected the Germans. He asked the Chancellor if he had any new ideas which could be studied, pursued, and offered in order to bring about a better situation, guarantee protection to Berlin, and make progress in reunification.

The Chancellor said he would answer this question most frankly. For him, this matter was really a human and not a national problem. He would like to see the people in the Soviet Zone lead a freer life. This he had publicly declared many times and he took it seriously. For him, it was a matter of human beings and not one of frontiers. He hoped the President would understand that on the last mentioned matter (frontiers) he could only speak publicly with the greatest caution as refugees and other groups in the Federal Republic put nationalistic feelings above human problems.

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The Chancellor noted that the USSR had signed the Human Rights Convention but paid no heed to these rights. He had spoken personally to many people who had fled the Soviet Zone and, although much was over-exaggerated, it could nevertheless be said that conditions in the Soviet Zone did not reflect the provisions of the Convention. He wondered if he should approach the three Western Powers with carefully-studied material asking them to make an effort to see that human rights be respected in the Soviet Zone. Thereby people in the Soviet Zone might be helped and moreover a political goal achieved. He doubted that the population would in the long run be in a position to withstand constant pressure used and wondered whether it might not capitulate one day.

In Berlin the situation was very different. The USSR has recognized that the Three Powers have occupation rights there. Therefore, he requested the Three Powers to stand on their international rights in Berlin. These measures could only be successful when we should succeed in achieving universal relaxation of tension through disarmament.

President Eisenhower had given to understand in their morning meeting that he was skeptical about Soviet readiness to bring about successful disarmament. A certain skepticism was not out of place but he thought it not completely out of the question that the Soviets too were ready for a relaxation of tension. He did not believe the Soviets would begin a war, for they too according to his interpretation wanted a peaceful settlement of problems. Therefore, the West on its side needed very great patience but must simultaneously remain strong too.

President Eisenhower then stated that, in the disarmament question, there has been one decisive consideration for the US--mutual and effective inspection. Only in this way could real confidence exist that an agreement would really be maintained. Up to now, all efforts on this question had come to naught. He was not skeptical about Soviet willingness to talk about this question but he had serious doubt that it would be possible soon to reach agreement on inspection.

The Chancellor said Khrushchev is serious about his seven year plan. When Mikoyan was in Bonn in spring 1958, he spoke to him about the apparent contradiction in the Soviet economy. Mikoyan replied that Stalin in his last years would not consider any changes or other plans, and in this period everything had remained as before. Now, this situation had to be overhauled. With this reply, Mikoyan had tacitly admitted economic difficulties.



The Chancellor said he followed the development in the USSR well as he could and had gained the impression that the Soviets up to now had not overcome their economic difficulties. These must be overcome; otherwise the system could not maintain itself. The solution of this task would be easier for the Soviets if they did not spend so much money for armament.

Regarding control, he had spoken many times with Secretary Dulles but was not always in complete agreement. He wanted to emphasize that he knew nothing about nuclear disarmament but he had certain conceptions about conventional disarmament. Secretary Dulles had always thought it would be extraordinarily hard to control whether the Soviets really kept the agreed maximum of 2.5 million troops as they actually had 3.5 million. In his opinion, this was not the decisive consideration. He thought it more important to control factories where heavy weapons, munitions therefore, and airplanes were manufactured. Such control, in his view, would not be easy to carry out. If the Russians wanted to have another million soldiers running around with weapons, this was not bad.

The Soviets feared the U.S. A dictator simply cannot understand that someone who possesses power will not use it. Therefore he fears being attacked someday by the U.S. The Germans lived 12 years under a dictatorship and experienced how much a dictatorship can change human mentality. The London negotiations of the UN Disarmament Commission had gone along very well until the Soviets suddenly brought negotiations to the breaking point because in the meantime they had developed their Sputnik.

[REDACTED]

When he combined all these different factors--the necessity before which Khrushchev saw himself of doing more to improve the USSR living standard, the indispensable unity of the West, and finally the possibility of a technically feasible control--then he came to have a certain optimism which was supported moreover in that Khrushchev possesses enough sound human understanding to propose another way when he sees he cannot advance on his originally chosen way.

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Khrushchev would get out of his difficulties, however, if he should succeed in getting the Federal Republic or Western Europe under his control and make European economic potential his own. With it, he could improve living conditions in the USSR (with a low living standard even a small advance meant much) and then Khrushchev would also incline to the idea that over time the U.S. would become tired, the tax burden would become too great, and at last the U.S. would give up.

The President said he agreed fully with the Chancellor's statement and a lengthy analysis of developments disclosed certain factors which could lead to a gradual change. But he thought more about the immediate future and especially about the two parts of Germany and Berlin. In this connection, he wished to ask the Chancellor a specific question. He asked if the Chancellor thought it politically and practically feasible and if it would be in harmony with his general conception if contacts with the Soviet Zone, i.e., with the Germans in the Soviet Zone, were to be increased so that without the Soviets being aware centripetal instead of centrifugal forces would be at work. He knew there were certain limits. The Federal Republic did not wish to recognize the Soviet Zone, which also was not politically bearable and in the public mind would seem to be capitulation. If it succeeded in awakening forces of the kind described in both parts of Germany, then this might demonstrate a new way of handling the problem in the immediate future.

To this, the Chancellor remarked he had discussed this question with Mr. Dulles when the latter was last in Bonn. It had then developed that Secretary Dulles and the gentlemen with him were not sufficiently informed about the actual situation in the Soviet Zone. Had they really known how things really looked there, they never would have posed the question. The Chancellor emphasized that it is not that contacts do not exist because one does not want to have anything to do with these people. If he were convinced one could do something to help the population of the Soviet Zone, he would immediately consider taking up contacts, but this would not do any good. What the Federal Government can do is being done. For example, means are given to Catholic and Evangelical churches to maintain their churches. For the people in the East Zone, however, it is exceedingly difficult and dangerous to maintain contacts or accept gifts. The Chancellor again assured that the Federal Government does what it can. Mr. Dulles was not fully familiar with the situation. When he told Mr. Dulles that people from the Soviet Zone could not legally enter the Federal Republic, he had referred to the agreement made with the Soviets in Paris after ending the blockade according to which free travel should be unhindered between both parts of Germany. It was

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probable that enough was not done to put these provisions into effect and make full use of our rights. Then U.S. and British patrols watched the roads to Berlin and for this purpose watchtowers were erected along the roads. Gradually, however, this (system) went to sleep and is wholly forgotten. The Chancellor again promised to do everything which the Federal Republic is in a position to do. For him, this is not a prestige matter. But he had no great hopes. Therefore, as heretofore, great patience was required.

As for Berlin, the city is very strongly supported by the Federal Republic and, for example, there is no more unemployment there. As soon as the Soviets wish to begin something new with Berlin, the answer of the Three Western Powers must be a decisive "No". He did not believe that the Soviets would let it come to war over Berlin. For the most extreme emergency, but only for it, there is still another possibility. In his November 1958 note, Khrushchev made an alternative proposal to change Berlin to a free city under four power and UN guarantee. But then the three powers would give up their rights in Berlin.

President Eisenhower asked if Khrushchev when he spoke of free access to West Berlin, could not have thought of giving up a corridor ten or two miles wide to the Federal Republic so that, so to say, this corridor would belong to the Federal Republic. The Chancellor said no. President Eisenhower repeated that it would have then to concern the right of access and not the right of ownership of this corridor. The Chancellor agreed with this view but pointed out that the right of access would be guaranteed by the Four Powers and the UN.

President Eisenhower renewed his proposal of contacts. In Geneva the USSR proposed the establishment of an all-German Commission which was rejected by the Three Western Powers. The Chancellor had now spoken of difficulties in establishing contacts. Perhaps there is another possibility to draw out the marionette government of the Soviet Zone in one way or another. He thought for example of exchanging certain groups for three months. Especially he thought in this connection of factory managers, farmers, professors, school principals, or doctors and lawyers too. If such a proposal were made, people in the Soviet Zone would have to show their colors, and on the other hand, the West through its handling of this matter would display greater flexibility. At his reception by the populace, banners were displayed asking help to liberate the seventeen million people in the East Zone. Seventeen million people there and fifty in the Federal Republic, however, must also make their influence felt. The Chancellor said he would gladly have this proposal studied and therefore at the moment would reserve his position.

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President Eisenhower pointed out that the Communists, in choosing their people for exchange groups of this kind, would select only 100 percent party-line people who were then to pursue subversive activity during their stay in the Federal Republic. In the further course of this exchange program certainly, however, people would also come over here who did not stick to the line. These people would then be a channel through which truth would enter the East Zone. He could of course not guarantee full success of this suggestion, but one would thereby show somewhat more flexibility. The West must show more activity. The Soviet Zone regime should be placed continually before decisions so that the powers there must say "Yes" or "No" to different proposals. The basic idea is that one should say to these people: "We are ready to show ourselves; you show yourselves".

The Chancellor said he had spoken with young people who were sentenced to twenty-five years imprisonment and then after an early release had come to the Federal Republic. When one heard what these people have experienced, one wishes to avoid anything which might expose anyone to such danger. He would have the President's proposal thoroughly examined as to its feasibility. The Chancellor informed the President then of a telegram he had received from the German Embassy in Washington. It reported on a conversation of an Embassy member with a member of the French Embassy. According to this conversation, de Gaulle intended to concentrate in his upcoming conversations with the President on the Algerian question. Questions affecting NATO, for example, tripartite directorate and atomic weapons, were not to be raised unless the President himself brought them up. In the telegram, the trip of de Gaulle to Algeria was reported as well as the necessity to support France in the UN vote. Finally, reference was made to the serious dangers resulting from France's defeat in the vote. The Chancellor then said he thought it right to send de Gaulle a letter to inform him he had spoken with the President about Algeria and believed that in a quiet and objective conversation de Gaulle and the President could reach an understanding. Details of his conversation with the President would not be disclosed.

President Eisenhower said that the Algerian problem had been studied for a long time. The American Ambassador in Paris had spoken thereof to de Gaulle and earlier Mr. Dulles had. He was aware of the seriousness particularly of this question and knew what it meant for de Gaulle and France. It was a serious and ticklish matter. He had no objections if the Chancellor wrote such a letter and said he believed the Chancellor knew that he would listen carefully and wish goodwill to French views. There were difficulties, however, that must be put aside.

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These questions will be the substance of de Gaulle's and the President's talks. The President suggested that the Chancellor emphasize the extraordinary great interest of the U.S. in NATO and point out that with respect to NATO the Algerian question must be solved. The Chancellor said de Gaulle was above all a psychological problem. He had spent 12 years out of things as had the Chancellor. For this reason, the Chancellor believed he understood him. He had the impression he could help de Gaulle jump his own shadows.

President Eisenhower recalled that he had taken the viewpoint that progress had to be made before he would be prepared to go to a Summit Conference. He asked the Chancellor if his was the right posture. The Chancellor replied affirmatively.

President Eisenhower then introduced the question of establishing diplomatic relations with Poland and Czechoslovakia. The Chancellor said Czechoslovakia was not interesting but Poland was. He had declared on various occasions that any future German Government must have good relations with Poland. But he and the Cabinet were of the opinion that establishing relations during the Geneva Conference was impossible since then this would have been the only result of the Conference, provided that the Poles really would have wanted this. In the course of his last visit with de Gaulle, he asked him for his views on this matter as good relations existed between Poland and France. In de Gaulle's view, establishing such relations would scarcely influence Gomulka as he was completely under Moscow's thumb, but it would have a good effect with the Polish people. He was seeking now an opportunity to send the President of the German Red Cross, who was in Poland a year ago, to Poland again perhaps in connection with the indemnification for injustices done in the invasion of Poland. He hoped he would soon be able successfully to find such an occasion.

President Eisenhower asked if the Chancellor was satisfied with the tempo and type of the German forces buildup. The Chancellor said "Yes" and that what had been promised would be accomplished--12 divisions as planned would be established by 1961.

President Eisenhower remarked that American forces were stationed all over the world and this had major financial effects, especially through heavy requirements for foreign exchange balances. The U.S. hoped some countries would be in position to equip their own military forces to a greater extent, especially "immobile forces" so the U.S. could be relieved of

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some of the burden. At the establishment of NATO, one started with the idea that U.S. divisions should only remain in Europe until European military forces existed. Events had taken a different course. The President referred in this connection to questions which are again and again raised by the Congress.

The Chancellor said that expenditures during the last stage of the German buildup are especially high--for budget year 1959/60 they are 13 billion Deutsche marks--but he was prepared to study what can be done in this matter after 1961.

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